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ABSTRACT

The humanistic approach to the teaching of speech is vital, especially in light of current trends in interpersonal communication. Four interrelated classroom goals should be pursued: (1) the establishment of a climate of trust, (2) the encouragement of open expression of emotions, (3) concentration upon the persuasive expression of interpersonal needs, and (4) the creation of an environment for individual discovery of self-originated emotions and the creative expression of these emotions through the use of the whole oral and bodily communicational modes. Resulting humanistic behavioral objectives include the speech teacher's classroom activities (stressing experience-based learning) and an open, non-evaluative atmosphere (resulting in less defensiveness and maximum sharing of feelings). (CH)

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HUMANISTIC APPROACH IN SPEECH:

AFFECTIVE BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES

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One of the very special contributions we, as speech educators, make to the whole realm of education, in general, and to students, in particular, resides in what we loosely call our "humanistic approach." Although most of us know we do it (contribute in this manner) -- and some of us do it more than others -- few of us, I suspect, spend much time thinking about what we do in specific terms, with respect to our "humanistic approach." With the current trend toward interpersonal communication -- and the subsequent or corresponding trend toward the interpersonalization of the basic speech course -- we are even more directly treating communication as a humanizing force than ever before (especially if you consider the traditional approach to public speaking). This trend toward interpersonal communication has changed or redirected our focus from influence to understanding and from speaker-acting-upon-auditor to mutual-interaction or transaction. Such a view of communication -- communication as it relates to one-to-one and one-to-few situations as opposed to the public speaking emphasis on the one-to-many situation -- places much greater emphasis on the desire to relate to other persons. This emphasis necessarily requires that we pay attention to "how we perceive each other, our orientation toward other people in general, our interpersonal response sets, and those behavior patterns which become serious barriers to developing meaningful relationships with others."[1] This interpersonal approach -- with its obvious humanistic bias -- has thrust us more dramatically, perhaps, than any other previous trend in speech, into the affective domain. "The affective domain contains behaviors and objectives which have some emotional overtone. It encompasses likes and dislikes, attitudes, values and beliefs."[2] The interpersonal approach has caused us to become concerned about affective behavioral objectives so that we might identify specifically the outcomes of learning that are desired in the affective domain. In this essay, I will provide four broad categories -- an overarching framework -- for a humanistic

approach.[3] I will then describe some of the affective behavioral objectives that might be included under each category.

The first category involves the confirmation of social reality -- a sensitivity to self and others in an interaction- or transaction-oriented environment. That is, a climate must be established that encourages open interaction and trust -- not "performance," concealment, selective revelation, and masking. The latter tends to destroy and distort productive feedback processes.

The second category -- which would seem to be dependent upon the first category -- would be the open expression of feelings -- to allow students to express their emotions. An interaction environment filled with stimulating and engaging activities requires that the parties to it transmit and receive information. They must make interpretations of messages and then respond to those messages. We, as teachers, can increase the effectiveness of our communication events by enhancing the desire and the need of students to reach out beyond themselves.

The third category -- again somewhat dependent on the establishment of the first two -- has to do with change and influence -- increasing a student's ability to influence his environment -- that is, to have a significant effect upon others, thus acting upon one's own needs. The stress should be on mutually influential interpersonal encounters rather than on one-way strategies of manipulation and control.

The fourth and final category involves work and creativity. The thrust here must be toward an environment which does not increase demands for conformity and mass production. Since the language of interpersonal communication involves the total person physically, emotionally and socially -- exercises must be so geared as to not only capture but capitalize on an individual's ability to extract the substance of his feelings and to put that substance into

messages that they create.

Achieving competence in interpersonal communication is directly related to becoming more human. To increase a student's ability to adapt to his external environment, to maintain himself internally, and to achieve his objectives should be the goals of an interpersonal communication course. There is a fair amount of research that supports the fact that an individual who performs well in each of these categories can be judged interpersonally competent.[4] "Research profiles of such persons indicate that they can give and receive help, sense a continuing process of growth, know how to learn, can solve interpersonal problems so that they remain solved, and recognize how they affect other people, as well as how they are affected by them."[5]

Within each of the four broad categories, a number of specific affective objectives might be listed which would give us more insight into the kinds of activities we might use in the classroom and would also reveal the kind of classroom environment that must be created and maintained. First, under the two broad categories of (1) sensitivity to self and others in an interaction-oriented environment and (2) the open expression of feelings, let me provide some suggested affective goals in behavioral terms. These affective goals might be classified under the heading, "Awareness of conditions."[6] A student can be identified as interpersonally literate if he:

1. relates personal requisite abilities, interests, and attitudes.
   a. participates in class activities that involve the sharing of personal information with others.
   b. given an attitude or ability check list, can discuss his own assets and liabilities with others.
   c. openly expresses his feelings regarding attitudes about himself and others.
   d. gives and receives nonevaluative descriptive feedback.

2. appreciates personal limitations in interpersonal communication as well as limitations of research.
   a. limits conclusions to present data but verbally recognizes the possibility of error.
   b. attempts to experiment and try out new behaviors.
   c. frequently challenges classmates and teachers regarding generalizations about interpersonal communication.
3. understands that the theoretical body of knowledge regarding interpersonal communication is generated by people with a compelling desire to understand how humans behave.
   a. shows respect for the ideas of communication theorists.
   b. watches TV programs about communication or with regard to the kinds of communication situations presented.
   c. recognizes that interpersonal communication is an enterprise of <u>human</u> beings in mutual interaction or transaction.
4. recognizes that the body of knowledge regarding interpersonal communication grows, possibly without limit (or: the processes encompassed by interpersonal communication lead to a never-ending quest for knowledge.)
   a. realizes that controversies are inevitable in the process of growth.
   b. evidences ability to live with change.
   c. upon learning the results of a study, states additional possibilities to investigate.
5. understands the conditions under which interpersonal communication operates.
   a. accepts the concept that dyadic (triadic or tetradic) communication is more intimate and personal than one-to-many situations.

b. gives of himself to learn more about himself through others (the Johari Window).

c. participates in a variety of interpersonal situations -- from dyadic to small-group and analyzes the differences between the situations.

6. appreciates the usefulness of interpersonal competence in the advancement of human welfare.

a. shows interest in engaging others in interpersonal relationships.

b. watches others in an attempt to analyze their interpersonal behavior.

c. attempts to analyze his own interpersonal behavior.

d. applies knowledge of interpersonal behavior to other human situations.

7. recognizes that the meaning of interpersonal competence depends upon one's personal growth, realization of one's potential and the establishment of meaningful human relationships.

a. defines interpersonal communication as a process of mutual interaction or transaction.

b. selects appropriate strategies to the solution of interpersonal problems.

c. can identify and state interpersonal problems.

Now, some suggested affective goals in behavioral terms for the third broad category -- that having to do with change and influence -- increasing a student's ability to influence his environment will be presented. These objectives would be dependent upon a student's "Acceptance of values." A student can be identified as interpersonally literate if he:

8. has the habit of responding.

a. willingly engages in interpersonal communication when one's needs require.

b. retains a questioning attitude to permit adequate consideration of

possible options but also retains an openness to mutual interaction and influence.

9. has the habit of analyzing the motivation for one's own behavior and the possible motivation for the behavior of others.
   a. habitually searches for explanations for behavior encountered in interpersonal situations.
   b. identifies assumptions made on the basis of interpersonal encounters and questions their validity.
10. realizes that interpersonal communication is part of modern living.
   a. comments on interpersonal communication in the family, in business, in teaching and in the community.
   b. when asked to comment on interpersonal communication in modern living, can cite both barriers to effective communication and strategies used to overcome the barriers.

Finally, some suggested affective behavioral objectives for the last broad category -- that of work and creativity, will be presented. These might be grouped under a heading such as "Preference for values." A student can be identified as interpersonally literate if he demonstrates:

11. curiosity.
   a. frequently asks questions regarding interpersonal communication.
   b. asks different people the same question.
   c. applies multi-resources to one question.
   d. often takes a second look.
   e. goes out of his way to find answers.
   f. reads numerous books and magazines on interpersonal communication or on communication in general.
   g. voluntarily initiates questions regarding interpersonal communication.

h. exhibits awareness of discrepancies between interpersonal situations.

i. includes reading about interpersonal communication (human relations) in leisure-time activities.

j. uses all senses in making observations and analyses.

k. takes risks with new values, attitudes, ideas and feelings.

12. patience.

a. is willing to wait for something worthwhile -- a meaningful approach, strategy or activity.

b. is willing to wait until he has as much evidence as possible before making judgments of others.

c. is willing to engage in long-range projects where no immediate generalizations are possible.

13. persistence.

a. is willing to repeat an effort voluntarily.

b. redesigns a strategy in an attempt to improve results.

14. open-mindedness.

a. listens carefully when others are talking.

b. insists on hearing more than one opinion or one piece of evidence.

c. is willing to change ideas when new or additional evidence is available.

d. will give consideration to ideas which differ from his own.

15. confidence in interpersonal communication.

a. attempts to use interpersonal strategies when possible.

b. looks for data when acting in interpersonal situations.

c. attempts to solve problems through interpersonal communication.

d. analyzes the interpersonal strategies of others.

e. consults and considers sources of interpersonal and communication theory.

16. the importance of interpersonal communication for understanding the modern world.
    a. enrolls in communication courses.
    b. participates in interpersonal communication oriented situations in extracurricular activities.
17. intellectual and emotional satisfaction gained from pursuit of interpersonal competence.
    a. engages in interpersonal activities during leisure time.
    b. asks about and shares his observations of similarities and differences in his environment and activities.
    c. willingly owns and helps others own their own values, attitudes, ideas and feelings.
18. the desire to be creative.
    a. participates in research on his own initiative.
    b. offers realistic alternatives to a suggested method for doing something.
    c. gets involved in independent study.
19. enjoys interpersonal communication for intellectual stimulation, emotional involvement and the pleasure of understanding human relations.
    a. gravitates toward idea-exchanging activities.
    b. suggests, supports, designs and promotes mutually influential interaction- and transaction-communication situations.[7]

Considering the breadth of the affective domain -- as revealed in these affective behavioral objectives -- our challenge is to create classroom

conditions that facilitate the attainment of these skills. Obviously, the teacher, the learner and the learning environment each contributes to the establishment of a conducive learning climate. First, and perhaps most difficult, we must break through the traditional one-way, teacher-to-student knowledge-distribution system. The teacher and the learner must share in the setting of learning goals. Learners must take the responsibility. They must be allowed to risk, to experiment and to help. They must be allowed to express their emotions. When feelings are openly disclosed and shared with others in a descriptive, non-evaluative manner, threat and defensiveness are minimized.

Certainly, learners will initially look to the teacher for model behavior. The teacher will receive little positive feedback about his success as a learning facilitator -- but he must learn to accept mistrust and attacks by the learners. He must try to deal effectively with the interpersonal problems that arise.

Finally, learning itself must become experience-based. Activities in the classroom should center only on directly observable units of behavior. Also, individuals are much more likely to experience the psychological success necessary for interpersonal competence acquisition when the feedback is minimally distorted and minimally evaluative.

The intent of this essay was to outline or define the parameters of a humanistic approach in speech. Many of the behaviors can be incorporated into what we know as a traditional public speaking course -- some obviously cannot. Some, of course, are already present. It would be my hope that with the broad humanistic base I have tried to present (the first step) a teacher of speech would be able to design specific classroom activities that would highlight many of these objectives (the second step) and then devise techniques for evaluating affective outcomes (the third and final step). The four broad categories I have presented, and the specific affective behavioral objectives

under each category, serve to reinforce the special contribution we, as speech educators, make to the whole realm of education -- our humanistic approach.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Joseph A. Ilardo, "Why Interpersonal Communication?" The Speech Teacher, Vol. XXI, No. 1 (January, 1972), 2. Quoted from Kim Giffin and Bobby Patton's Basic Readings in Interpersonal Communication (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. ix-x.

[2]Robert J. Kibler, Larry L. Barker, and David T. Miles, Behavioral Objectives and Instruction (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1970), p. 56.

[3]The four categories have been borrowed from Arthur P. Bochner and Clifford W. Kelley, "Interpersonal Competence: A Paradigm for Planned Change in Undergraduate Communication Instruction" -- A paper (unpublished) presented at the Speech Communication Convention, Chicago, Illinois, December, 1972.

[4]See C. Argyris's, Interpersonal Competence and Organizational Effectiveness (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1962), Integrating the Individual and the Organization (New York: Wiley, 1964), Organization and Innovation (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1965), "Explorations in Interpersonal Competence-I," Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, Vol. I, No. 1 (1965), 58-83, "Explorations in Interpersonal Competence-II," Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, Vol. I, No. 1 (1965), 255-269, and "Conditions for Competence Acquisition and Theory," Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1968), 147-177. Also see D. A. Kolb and R. E. Boyatzis, "On The Dynamics of the Helping Relationship," in D. A. Kolb, I. M. Rubin, and J. M. McIntyre (editors), Organizational Psychology: A Book of Readings (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1971), pp. 339-367.

[5]Bochner and Kelly, "Interpersonal Competence," p. 17.

[6]Albert F. Eiss, and Mary Blatt Harbeck, Behavioral Objectives in the Affective Domain (Washington, D. C.: National Science Supervisors Association, 1969), pp. 27-31. The major headings (like "Awareness of Conditions") are based on those suggested by Bloom and Krathwohl in David R. Krathwohl and Benjamin S. Bloom and Bertram B. Masia, Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook I: Cognitive Domain (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1956), and their Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook II: Affective Domain (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1964).

[7]Eiss and Harbeck, Behavioral Objectives, pp. 27-31. These affective behavioral objectives were adapted from a list provided in this source. They are provided here as suggestions for an approach; they should not be considered definitive.